

Gun jams in farm attack

Farmer grateful to be alive after intruder's weapon misfires eight times

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A GUN pressed to his forehead, Hopewell farmer Mark Anthony looked into the cold eyes of the man who was about to kill him, and then heard him pull the trigger.

He expected everything to fade to black, but realised he could still feel his heart racing, and the hooded man was still standing in front of him.

The man cocked the gun and pulled the trigger again, and again, but still nothing happened.

Yesterday morning Anthony's partner, Sarah Naicker, said she was asleep when a voice told her to wake up at around 12.30 am.

"It was divine intervention. I knew I had to get up and I walked through to the lounge but I couldn't see anything.

"I ran back to the room and told Mark he needed to wake up."

Anthony switched the light on and walked through to the lounge and found one of the windows had been broken.

"I stuck my head through the hole in the window and saw a man lurking in the shadows, against the outside wall.

"I shouted at him but instead of running away, he ran straight at me.

"He pulled the glass from the window, climbed inside and pulled out a gun. He said: 'I am going to shoot you'.

"He pulled the trigger twice and it didn't go off. My heart was racing."



Hopewell farmer Mark Anthony holds the spade he used to fight off the two gunmen who entered his home early yesterday morning.

PHOTO: IAN CARBUTT

Anthony said he had placed a spade behind the lounge door the previous day and decided to make a run for it.

"I grabbed the spade and just started

swinging it at the man. He ran behind the table in the lounge and called to his partner outside."

Anthony said the partner jumped

through the window and pulled out a firearm and began shooting at Anthony.

"He fired at me eight times. Not once did that gun discharge."

Meanwhile, Naicker had run outside and began screaming for help.

"I ran out the back door and screamed for help. I saw the neighbour's lights switch on. That's when I think the men ran away.

"If I hadn't woken up, we both would have been dead. God protected and saved us."

They said they were moving out as soon as possible.

"If Sarah hadn't woken me up, *Weekend Witness* would not be here writing this story. They would have been writing my obituary," said Anthony.

The couple said the Thornville police acted swiftly and placed great importance on the pair's safety.

KwaZulu-Natal Agricultural Union (KwaNalu) security desk head Koos Marais said they were outraged that another farming family had been attacked, making it the 30th farm attack in KZN this year.

"We are grateful that no lives were lost and trust the police will do all in their power to bring those men to trial."

He urged police to increase visible policing in all rural areas and encouraged people living in isolated areas to ensure their homes were secure.

Plessislaer SAPS spokesperson Captain Musa Ntombela said no arrests had been made and an investigation was under way.

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